

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, July 20, 1890, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, N.S. Sunday, July 20, (1890) My dear Mrs. Bell:

Thank you very much for your pencil letter received yesterday. You need not apologize for using pencil, I have been guilty of that indiscretion too often myself. I wish you were up here in our cool bracing atmosphere. Don't you think you and Mr. Bell could come? Alec must be in New York on the 23rd August for a few days. Why not return with him? It would give us both so much pleasure and will shorten the length of our separation. I wish you and Mr. Bell would think of it.

Elsie is not as well as we hoped and expected, it is a great disappointment, still the child is perfectly well otherwise, happy and enjoying the being here with us once more. Alec thinks she is better than when she came, but I can not see any improvement. We are all very glad to be here once more. Alec and Mr. McCurdy are very much pleased with their two dens, one on each side the sitting room. Of course they do not cover up any of the windows, still they shut out a great deal of light which we can ill spare, especially after the winter windows are up, so I do not think them such great improvements. The season is horribly backward, the most so know for years, and my flowers are only just coming into bloom. Fancy it!

The house-boat was launched last week and will be ready for 2 service this week. I am in no hurry to be off as I find Beinn Bhreagh and it's improvements absorbingly interesting. Alec too, is full of his merino sheep and experiments with their wool. The one product of all his sheep is one little lamb, but it is a ram and Alec is happy and minds little when the shepherd tells him that his ewes are some of them so old that they fall down on their sides and can not get up again without assistance! We had a steam-launch down for our

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inspection last week, it was quite a pretty craft and we were very much pleased until it kept us waiting one whole day while it took on water. The next day it came on time but the weather was too stormy to venture out in it until the afternoon. At last however we got off, Grace and Charlie, Alec and I, and proceeded gaily on our way to Watchabacket. Arrived in the middle of the lake, the water they had been so long in collecting gave out and we had to take to our boats and row home. I don't know what the gentlemen said, but Grace and I did want to use some pretty strong language. We have not seen the launch since. Elsie and Daisy bathe every day. Daisy is fast becoming quite a good swimmer and I am proud of her. Elsie is improving in bathing. We have a nice new floor down in the hall and the other day we had a successful dancing party on it. Alec played and Mr. and Mrs. Kennan brought their three guests and six came from hotel or town, so we had quite a gathering. The gentlemen all appeared in knickerbockers and flannel shirts. Mr. McCurdy's was white with red cash and stockings and Mr. Kennan wore a gorgeous red Russian peasant costume.

Love to Carrie, Mary and Louise, Mr. Bell and yourself.

Always affectionately, Mabel.